6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

and ranches increased the need for additional capital, but funds were not available to meet the demand. Periods of declining employment, that is the recession of 1957–1959, cut into individual earnings from wage labor. No new proven oil fields had been tapped, and interest in oil exploration decreased. When individual and tribal earnings fell off, the demand for welfare funds increased. The council contributed the greatest share to the county welfare program, so the relief the people received was yet another drain upon tribal income.

Tribal self-government suffered under these pressures. It was difficult to get a majority of the tribe to support any political or economic measure. The council, itself split on issues, despaired of tribal unity:

> Members of the Blackfeet Tribe are generally very poor. Their income is meager and consists mostly of income from leased trust land, casual labor, and participation in Tribal programs operated with Tribal income.
>
> It is very difficult to convince these people that Tribal income should be assigned for any purpose. Most of our people see only the spectre of having their income, and consequently Tribal programs and their direct benefits, diverted into programs designed for only more progressive members of the Tribe. To these people, it is a matter of personal survival. Any possible reduction in Tribal income to them automatically means a reduction in personal income.
>
> . . . until at least thirty per cent of the adult population of the Tribe becomes self-supporting and thus able to plan and to think in terms of the future, it appears that programs requiring popular approval for use of locally supervised Tribal funds will certainly be limited to those programs which meet the daily emergency needs of members of the Blackfeet Tribe. (Letter from the Secretary of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 3, 1960, Blackfeet Tribal Council Documents.)

Consequently, long-range programs were often deferred, per capita payments were made, and in most cases, the recipients spent the money for immediate needs.

The pessimism reflected above should be tempered, however. Even as he wrote the letter, the tribal secretary and other councilmen were working on plans for improving the housing on the reservation. Following councils, in face of continuing criticism by many tribal members, invested money in programs to develop tribal resources and provide more opportunities for employment on the reservation: one of the first fruits of this effort was the establishment of the Blackfeet Forest Products Enterprises in 1963. This group was funded by the tribe in the amount of $10,000 and given the authority to lease a mill site and to award a franchise for the erection and operation of a sawmill to a private operator. The mill was to hire local help and to use logs cut by Blackfeet labor from the tribal timber holdings. Mill operations have suffered from breakdowns because of the age of the equipment acquired; several operators have taken the concession and given it up in the face of difficulties; but the mill continues to operate, troubles are being ironed out, and the hours of work available to local men has gradually increased to the point that the sawmill and attendant timber cutting operations appear to be a small but important prop to the local economy.

With a tribal investment of both land and money, and a loan from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the Business Council has developed an industrial park adjacent to the railroad just south of Browning. The council,

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Irrigation

There are three irrigation projects on the Blackfeet Reservation, Two Medicine, Badger-Fisher and Birch Creek, which provide irrigation for an area of some 40,000 acres. The Bureau of Indian Affairs at Browning, Montana, estimates that an additional 15,000 acres could be irrigated if improvements were to be made in the existing projects. The U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Missouri River Basin Investigation Project, Report No. 140 (1954), and its supplements, deal comprehensively with the Blackfeet Reservation Irrigation Projects.

Wildlife

It is estimated by "agency" personnel that most Blackfeet Indian families who live on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation have available and utilize an average of two deer per year. Relatively few fish and elk are "taken," and these contribute but little to the over-all food production or consumption of the Blackfeet Reservation.

Agricultural Credit

The availability of credit to the Blackfeet Indians for agricultural production can be placed in three categories, regular commercial, regular governmental and specifically Indian.

The First National Bank of Browning, Montana, is not the only regular commercial source of credit to the Blackfeet Indians, but it is probably the most important. During 1961, it expected to make regular commercial agriculture production loans, totaling around $1,000,000, to Blackfeet Indians for cattle operations.

Data on the Production Credit Administration loans to Blackfeet Indians operating ranches on the Blackfeet Reservation are presented in Table 21.

TABLE 21. PRODUCTION CREDIT ADMINISTRATION LOANS TO BLACKFEET INDIANS

Year	Number of loans	Total amount	Amount delinquent
1956	6	$ 64,229	None
1957	9	$111,755	None
1958	11	$121,921	None
1959	11	$137,330	None
1960	11	$129,163	None

In addition to the above, a total of $50,000 is available to the Tribal Council for its special allocation to Indian ranchers.

The Farm and Home Administration has a total of twenty-one loans with the Blackfeet Indians on the Blackfeet Reservation. Several of these are fairly sizable loans for home construction and improvement.

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The most common source of agricultural credit is the Bureau of Indian Affairs, through the Agency Credit Officer. The funds are several and are earmarked for certain kinds of uses. In each case, the total amount available is relatively small. The 1960 application for a $1,000,000 agricultural production loan to the Blackfeet Indians on the Blackfeet Reservation was approved, but at the time of the study only $100,000 had been implemented. At that time, five loan applications were being processed to cover the leased $100,000.

652 233 691

The repayment cattle enterprise (sheep excluded) is of special interest. The program is of long standing and involves paying back to the Tribe one heifer for each ten heifers originally received, the payment to be made within a ten-year period. For each bull that is received, three heifers must be repaid during the ten-year period. The customary ratio is one bull for each twenty-five cows. The title to the "repayment cattle" belongs to the U.S. Government until repayment is made. These cattle are not carried as property on an individual's tax assessment.

The official agreement covering the cattle repayment program expired in 1963. There was apparently some opposition to its being continued because of its "failure to teach business."

Education

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The Commission on the Rights, Liberties and Responsibilities of the American Indian, 1961, included in its report a section on "Education." This section is reproduced in the "Annual Report of Indian Education in Montana" and is especially recommended for reading to all who are associated with Indians or Indian problems. The statistics covering the elementary and secondary education of Blackfeet Indians living on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation are presented in Tables 22, 23 and 24.

811 812 MT

TABLE 22. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION, 1960-61

School	Total enrollment	Indian enrollment
Babb #8	None	None
Browning #9	915	738
Cut Bank #15	886	115
East Glacier #50	73	38
Little Badger #50	21	21
Total	1,895	932

871 813 MT

TABLE 23. HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION, 1960-61

School	Total enrollment	Indian enrollment
Browning #9	231	173
Cut Bank #15	360	19
Total	591	192

433 increased the need for additional capital, but funds were not available
[434] to meet the demand. Periods of declining employment, i.e., the
[464] recession of 1957-59, cut into individual earnings from wage labor. No
[458] proven oil fields had been tapped and interest in oil exploration
[315] decreased. When individual and tribal earnings fell off, the demand on
[657] welfare funds increased. The Council contributed the greatest share to the county welfare program, so the relief the people received was yet another drain upon tribal income.

643 Tribal self-government suffered under these pressures. It was
184 difficult to get a majority of the tribe to support any political or economic measure. The Council, itself split on issues, despaired of tribal unity:

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> . . .until at least thirty per cent of the adult population of the Tribe becomes self-supporting and thus able to plan and to think in terms of the future, it appears that programs requiring popular approval for use of locally supervised Tribal funds will certainly be limited to those programs which meet the daily emergency needs of members of the Blackfeet Tribe.[165]

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[127] [165] Letter from the Secretary of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 3, 1960, unpublished documents of the Blackfeet Tribal Council.

14: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1960) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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Montana

652 Consequently few of the long-range programs were started, per capita payments were made, and in most cases, the money was spent for immediate needs.

Summary

433 177 The emphasis, in this chapter, has been upon the economic problems of Blackfeet readaptation following the depletion of the buffalo. The pressures put upon the people, both directly and indirectly, to change other parts of their culture can be summarized now and related to the problem of the maintenance or replacement of the traditional value and prestige systems.

The end of the hunting economy made hunting skills obsolete. Migratory seasonal dwelling patterns lost their function. Dependency undermined band and tribal leadership. Warfare and horse raiding were [556] stopped. A man no longer was able to exhibit bravery in the hunt, in war, or on the raid. He no longer could use these means to acquire property with which to display generosity.

Other cultural characteristics were seen to have been under strong pressure. Indian beliefs, religion, ritual, curing practices and some aspects of social life had been discouraged or outlawed for [554] many years. The acceptance of hospitalization and modern medicine closed Indian curing as a channel to prestige. The conversion of many people to Christianity, and the suppression of religious expression [554] and ritual, undermined these beliefs and practices. The religious avenues to status were slowly blocked.

Many people remained committed to the old values but were hard pressed to make economic adaptation and at the same time express the

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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The Returns for the Land

The provisions of the agreement stated that the Indians were to surrender about 115,000 acres lying principally on the south side of the Bow River; this land constituted nearly half of the reserve. Upon surrender, it became the obligation of the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs to dispose of the land in the way that would be most beneficial to the tribe. The agreement guaranteed to the Indians a minimum return from their lands of $1,800,000, though there was no time limit for accumulating this sum.

The handling of the proceeds from the sale fell under two headings. First, a sum of $400,000 was to be made immediately available to the Indians for capitalization of agriculture. Of this sum, $350,000 went for the construction of houses, barns, and sheds on the land to be farmed; the houses were to be furnished with stoves, tables, chairs, beds, and bedding; wells were to be dug; fences erected; roads graded; motor ploughs, harvesting engines, and other expensive equipment were to be bought; and granaries for storing the produce were to be built. The remaining $50,000 constituted a loan fund from which farmers might draw for financing the purchase of individual equipment such as mowers and binders. The loan was to be repaid in six years and the money returned to the fund for future loans.

Second, the sum remaining from the first auction and sums from subsequent sales were to be set aside as a trust fund. Like other monies belonging to Indian groups, this fund was to be managed by the Department of Indian Affairs. The Blackfoot tribe was to receive annual interest on it, the rate of interest and the method of utilizing the money being subject to the discretion of the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs acting under the direction of the Governor-General of Canada. The Blackfoot have received 5 per cent on their deposited capital.[1]

The immediate use of the interest money had been planned by Markle in collaboration with various other administrators. Over and above the building and ploughing programme which was already provided for, expenditures were to be for four main purposes: (1) wages for the operators of heavy farm machinery; (2) wages for an instructor to teach and supervise farming; (3) the purchase of blankets, yard goods, and clothing for the aged; (4) rations for each

[1] All other Canadian Indians also get 5 per cent on their money, except the Six Nations, who receive 6 per cent.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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Blackfoot consisting of 7 lb. of beef each week, 5 lb. of flour per week, and 1 lb. of tea per month. Any residuum, after these matters were cared for, might be expended at the discretion of the agent with the usual approval from Ottawa.

The policy was clear, from Markle's viewpoint, that this income was to be spent for agriculture in order to make the Blackfoot self-sufficient, and for such welfare measures as were immediately necessary. There appears to have been no objections to the issue of rations *per se*, as long as they were not being paid for by public funds, and it is unfortunate that we do not know how he regarded such a practice. Elsewhere he was inflexible in seeing no third way; the Indian must be either a pauperized dependent on the public treasury or a self-sufficient yeoman who earned his own living. He did not seem to recognize that with their trust funds the Blackfoot might be neither dependent on a departmental budget nor self-sufficient yeomen. If this were not clear in 1912, it became clear later.

It was probably drift or fortuitous circumstances that developed this third way. Human foresight seems to have been minimal. The effects can be most clearly seen by noting changes in the use of funds over several decades.

The following list aproximates the expenditure of interest money for the fiscal year 1939-40.

Annuities	$ 24,000
Rations	$ 26,000
Medical Care	$ 30,000
Clothing for aged or infirm and furniture for newly-weds	$ 3,000
Equipment issued (e.g. wagons, tents)	$ 10,000
Live stock issued (e.g. horses, cattle)	$ 7,000
Maintenance of roads and buildings	$ 6,000
Wages of white employees	$ 9,000
Total	$115,000[1]

Though we have no comparable budget figures for the early years after the sale of the land, an increase in amount and diversity of expenditure is readily inferred. Wages for farm instructors, and rations and clothing for the aged or infirm are the only identical types of expenditures. All other categories have changed. Wages for the operators of heavy farm machinery were more recently paid by assessment against the returns of the individual farmers. Annuities, medical care, the issuing of equipment and live-stock, are

[1]From the late Mr. H. E. James, then head clerk at the Blackfoot Agency.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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652 innovations. Maintenance we might readily anticipate.[1] However,
657 that this is not the budget of a community of self-sufficient persons is apparent. What follows is an endeavour to account for certain of these changes from the administrative point of view.

651 First, and necessarily for the trend to develop at all, there was a rapid increase, probably not anticipated, of the trust funds. From an initial $300,000 laid aside for the trust fund, the capital increased to well over one million dollars by 1920. The increment came from three sources. Small parcels of land were sold from time to time from the remaining lands, such as a right-of-way for a new irrigation
[657] ditch. It is possible for the Superintendent of Indian Affairs to sell small portions of reserve land without the consent of the residing Indians, if it can be shown to be for the general welfare. The second source is from further sales in the surrendered tract. A second auction in 1917 increased the capital by over a million dollars. Subsequent sales and adjustments of this land brought relatively smaller prices
651 but increased the capital constantly by small amounts. Third, there
427 was revenue from the lease of reserve lands. Under the Indian Act,
[657] uncultivated lands may be leased by the Superintendent General and the returns added to the trust fund. The majority of these leases occurred during the nineteen-twenties and were in some cases on a cash basis, though mainly on a crop-share basis, the trust fund receiving one quarter of the annual produce. Except for poor years, the majority of these contracts were fulfilled and constituted a steady source of new capital for the trust fund.

657 There was also a change in personnel, not only in Ottawa but at the Blackfoot Agency as well. Markle's time of retirement cut off his energetic influence as overseer of policy, so that whatever stability and clarity of purpose he contributed was lost. J. H. Gooderham, one of the older generation of agents, was succeeded in 1920 by his son, G. H. Gooderham, who was to serve over twenty-five years at this post. While it is certain that father and son shared an interest in social welfare, there was at the same time frequently a difference in outlook between the generations of the Indian Department officials in the West. The generation prior to 1910 had known from first hand the Indian of the buffalo days. Its members were by and large optimistic, vigorous, and influenced by the frontier spirit which granted Indians at least hardiness and stoicism. The task at hand

[1] A detailed statement of the benefits from the Trust Fund is given in Appendix A.

A [See category 652, pp. 189-190--Analyst]

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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A yearly total of $5,880 is paid fourteen Indians for these permanent jobs. The wages for the interpreters and the scouts for the Mounted Police are paid by the Dominion government. The assistant stockmen are paid with funds from the sale of beef. Those connected with the mines are paid from the operating revenue of the mines. The hospital worker alone is paid directly from the trust fund as part of the operating cost of the hospital. 463 465 657

These jobs[A] are filled by application to the person under whose jurisdiction the job falls, e.g., the white stock-man or, at the mines, the Indian "room-boss." With the exception of the hospital assistant these jobs do not require work six days of the week. At the stock-farm, for instance, a man wishing to leave for a few days may give his job to another. This is used as an argument by whites to show that the Indians are lackadaisical. However, the fact that these jobs are seldom open, and that seven of these jobs have been filled by the same Indian for over five years suggests the contrary. Some Indians do work constantly at certain jobs. 466 657

(3) Temporary jobs on the reserve are of two kinds: those handled by the agency or the white employees and those directed by the Indians themselves. 464 654

Temporary jobs handled by the agency or the white employees are filled by application to or at the request of the director involved. They depend on the season and the exigencies of the moment. They may involve greasing a tractor, painting a building (a man is even paid for painting his own house), mending a road, cleaning a corral or a well, or stopping leaks in a roof. No doubt individual competence and industriousness play a part in securing these jobs. The farm instructor who knows that an Indian is careful and efficient in his work is more apt to employ him than one who is less reliable. Availability is another factor. A man who lived near the stock corral said he never was without a job when he wished one, as the stockman always came to him first when in need of help. The agent, too, occasionally gives a needy Indian a note addressed to a particular white employee asking that he be employed. Consistent with this policy of giving jobs to the needy, some Indians with considerable cash in their accounts at the agency are not employed at the agency-controlled jobs. The agency allocates approximately $7,000 as wages to Indians for temporary jobs. This sum comes from a variety of sources such as deduction from the income from cattle or grain as well as from interest on trust funds. 466 657 [463] 652 651

A [i.e., permanent jobs on the reserve--Analyst]

Because so few Blackfoot speak and write English adequately, this letter is similar to many received by the agent. This impression of immaturity is furthered by the constant appeal for funds from a given account in the agency, and the common practice of working only when in need of cash.

Consider also meetings of the councils of chiefs. The chiefs enter the room feet clad in moccasins, wearing somewhat shabby suits or brightly coloured cowboy shirts, their heads often covered with red bandanas on top of which sit broad-brimmed, dusty hats. Some sit on chairs, others find greater comfort sitting tailor fashion on the floor. Most chiefs must communicate through an interpreter, and those who speak English often use broken English with phrasing comical to the white ear. In view of the white tendency to consider seriously only words addressed by persons who dress correctly, speak in proper ways, and know approved decorum, the agency cannot consider the chiefs equal partners in the direction of reserve affairs.

Like other agencies, the Blackfoot agency's policies are determined in part by the expectations of the Indian Affairs Branch at Ottawa. A good reserve is one where production is aimed at maintaining or achieving a level considered adequate for the people. There should be a low index of crime, divorce, disease and, if possible, few complaints by Indians or their white neighbours. To the extent possible there should be a decreasing rate of expenditure out of public funds and an increasing rate of school attendance. In these respects the Blackfoot agency stands well. Through competent agency management production has been maintained fairly well in certain respects and increased in others. We have no indices to compare crime, divorce, and complaint rates from this agency with other agencies, but judging by the tendency for Indians to remain on the reserve, complaints at least should be low from the Blackfoot area. It is probable that the mild encouragement given to Blackfoot religious ceremonials is considered a step towards maintaining native moral sanctions. Certainly the Blackfoot hospital offers a health service that surpasses that of many communities in the vicinity. Thanks to the trust fund, public money expended for the reserve has reached a minimum, and nearly every child goes to school.

With respect to the Indians three administrative principles appear to be operative. First is the principle of preventing the Indians from having too great benefits from the trust fund at any one time, lest they become demoralized. On this ground many

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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APPENDIX A

Uses of Interest from Trust Fund

The following are the uses of the interest from the trust fund to 1941:

Annuities. Cash annuities have been paid from a date within a decade after the surrender of the land. At first $6 was paid to every person. The increased income after a few years permitted raising the sum to $10. A few years later Indian agitation succeeded in obtaining $25 for all under fifty years of age and $50 for those older than fifty. In 1940, 728 Indians received $25 and 126 received $50.

Rations. The same rations are given every man, woman, and child as specified in the surrender agreement except that tea was reduced to ¾ lb. per month. Special rations for the old, infirm, convalescent, and indigent have been established. This may mean monthly allotments of such articles as baking powder, salt, oatmeal, sugar, syrup, beans, soap, matches, and tobacco. If a person is not under fifty, he may receive these rations if certified by the hospital or by the agent.

Medical Care. The hospital was built in 1922. In 1940 it was staffed by a resident physician, six registered nurses, sundry attendants and maintenance workers. Free medical treatment, bathing facilities, and lodging for short periods of time are provided for any Indian. The medical budget also pays for special treatment that cannot be given locally, viz., Blackfoot patients in tubercular and insane hospitals.

Clothing. Old people may receive an annual issue of various articles of apparel, including yard goods, suits, overcoats, blankets, underwear, shirts, and overshoes.

Equipment. Newly married couples are given at trust expense the following items: harnesses, a wagon, chairs, tables, a bed, mattress, cooking stove, and kitchen utensils. All farmers may avail

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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themselves of farm implements purchased by the trust fund but must hire the tractors at their own expense to cultivate their fields. Free seed is issued. Every year fifteen to twenty new harnesses and wagons are issued either to the newly married couples or to others in need of replacement. Tents are issued to persons who can show need for them.

Live-stock. Besides the purchase of blooded bulls and stallions for the improvement of the reserve herds, the trust fund is used to buy work horses and calves. Four work horses are issued to each new farmer. Farmers who have lost horses or non-farming Indians in special need of transportation may also be issued work horses. A varying number of beef calves are issued to persons on the reserve; policy emphasizes giving to those in need of additional income. As these donations are handled with the general herd, the owners are not burdened with their care.

Maintenance. Varying sums are annually set aside for materials and wages to dig ditches, grade roads, mend culverts, paint houses, repair buildings, and dig wells. Most of this work is done by Indians, though where skilled labour is required, whites are usually called in.

Wages to white employees. This includes $1,500 per year as wages for each of four farming instructors and three stock-men. They are provided with a house erected at tribal expense, for which they pay a nominal rent. These men are also provided with automobiles for facilitating their work and weekly issues of meat for their families.